

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----242018Z 026987 /72-70
R 241944Z MAY 77
FM USMISSION NATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3787
INFO USDEL SALT TWO GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NATO 03988

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO, NAC, XF
SUBJECT: MAY 23 NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL BRIEFING ON THE
MIDDLE EAST.

1. WE TRANSMIT BELOW THE TALKING POINTS USED BY ACDA
DIRECTOR WARNKE IN BRIEFING NAC MAY 23 ON THE MIDDLE
EAST PRIOR TO WARNKE'S SALT BRIEFING. THERE WERE NO
QUESTIONS ON THE ME BRIEFING. ACTION REQUESTED:
DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS AS APPROPRIATE.

2.BEGIN TEXT: THE SECRETARY AND GROMYKO HAD A TWO-HOUR
SESSION ON THE MIDDLE EAST IN GENEVA. THE SECRETARY DES-
CRIBED THE RESULTS OF OUR CONSULTATIONS TO DATE WITH MIDDLE
EAST LEADERS, AND GROMYKO DID THE SAME WITH PARTICULAR
EMPHASIS ON THE RECENT VISIT OF ARAFAT TO MOSCOW.

WE NOTED THAT THE PRINCIPAL OBSTACLE TO RECONVENING THE
GENEVA CONFERENCE REMAINS THE QUESTION OF PALESTINIAN
REPRESENTATION. WE TOLD THE SOVIETS THAT, IN OUR VIEW,
RESPONSIBILITY FOR SEEKING TO RESOLVE THIS PROBLEM LIES
IN THE FIRST INSTANCE WITH THE ARABS, GIVEN THE
UNACCEPTABLE PLO POSITION THAT IT DOES NOT RECOGNIZE
ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST AND DOES NOT ACCEPT SECURITY
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COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338. THE SOVIETS SAID, BASED
ON THEIR TALKS WITH ARAFAT, THAT IT IS THEIR DEFINITE
IMPRESSION THE PLO IS PREPARED TO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL'S
RIGHT TO EXIST IF ISRAEL WILL RECOGNIZE THE RIGHT OF THE
PALESTINIANS TO AN INDEPENDENT STATE. THEY SAID THE PLO IS
NOT NOW PREPARED, HOWEVER, TO TAKE THIS POSITION OFFICIALY.

WE TOLD THE SOVIETS IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR THE ARABS TO RECOGNIZE THAT A PEACE AGREEMENT MUST GO BEYOND SIMPLY ENDING THE STATE OF WAR AND MUST ALSO DEAL WITH STEPS TOWARD NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS IN THE AREA--A POSITION WHICH GROMYKO INDICATED THAT THE SOVIETS AGREE WITH AT LEAST IN PRINCIPLE. THE SOVIETS IN TURN STRESSED THE NEED FOR GREATER ISRAELI FLEXIBILITY ON THE QUESTION OF TERRITORY AND BORDERS. WE AGREED THAT THIS REMAINS A MAJOR PROBLEM AND, AS ONE APPROACH TO DEALING WITH IT, STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING CREDIBLE SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS AND QUARANTEES, INCLUDING CONSIDERATION OF THE CONCEPT OF DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN POLITICAL BORDERS AND DEFENSE LINES.

THE SOVIETS AND WE DID NOT DISCUSS IN ANY DETAILED OR DEFINITIVE WAY POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO EITHER THE SUBSTANTIVE OR PROCEDURAL ISSUES INVOLVED IN A SETTLEMENT. THE MAIN CONCERN OF THE SOVIETS WAS TO REACH AGREEMENT ON A JOINT STATEMENT IN GENEVA ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF CONVENING THE GENEVA CONFERENCE. THEY WANTED THIS STATEMENT TO SPECIFY A MONTH WHEN GENEVA SHOULD RECONVENE AND TO AFFIRM THE ROLE OF THE U.S. AND USSR AS CO-CHAIRMEN IN PREPARING FOR GENEVA.

WE BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE A SENSE OF INVOLVEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS IF THEY ARE NOT TO MAKE THAT PROCESS MORE DIFFICULT. WE, THEREFORE AGREED TO A NON-SUBSTANTIVE JOINT STATEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING KEY ELEMENTS:

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1. REAFFIRMATION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE AS A FORUM FOR NEGOTIATING A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT.

2. AGREEMENT THAT WE AND THE SOVIETS WILL DIRECT OUR JOINT EFFORTS TOWARD RESUMING THE GENEVA CONFERENCE IN THE FALL, WHILE AVOIDING A FIRM COMMITMENT TO ANY SPECIFIC DATE AND EMPHASIZING THAT IT IS IMPORTANT THE CONFERENCE BE WELL PREPARED.

3. AGREEMENT, AT OUR SUGGESTION, TO MONTHLY U.S.-SOVIET CONSULTATIONS ON THE MIDDLE EAST AT AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL.

4. AGREEMENT THAT WE WILL BOTH CONTINUE OUR CONSULTATIONS WITH THE PARTIES.

WE GAVE THE SOVIETS OUR JUDGMENT THAT IT WILL TAKE SOME TIME FOR THE ISRAELI INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION TO SORT ITSELF OUT-- POSSIBLY THROUGH JUNE OR EVEN INTO

JULY .

DESPITE THE NEW ELEMENT OF UNCERTAINTY THAT THE ISRAELI
ELECTION RESULTS HAVE INJECTED INTO THE SITUATION, THE
SECRETARY HAS ASKED ME TO ASSURE YOU THAT WE REMAIN
COMMITTED TO A MAJOR EFFORT TO MAKE PROGRESS THIS YEAR.
THE PRESIDENT WILL COMPLETE HIS CONSULTATIONS WITH THE KEY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 NATO 03988

EXDIS

ARAB LEADERS WHEN PRINCE FAHD VISITS WASHINGTON THIS WEEK.
HE WILL MEET WITH THE NEW ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER AS SOON
AS A GOVERNMENT IS FORMED. AFTER THAT, THE SECRETARY EN-
VISAGES RETURNING TO THE MIDDLE EAST TO ELICIT THE
SUGGESTIONS OF THE PARTIES ON A FRAMEWORK OF PRINCIPLES
TO GUIDE THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE AS WELL
AS ON A SOLUTION TO THE PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION AND
OTHER PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS. WE WILL BE PREPARED AT THAT
TIME TO OFFER TO THE PARTIES SUGGESTIONS OF OUR OWN IF
NECESSARY. END TEXT. BENNETT

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